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SUBJECT: Saeima Speaker Emsis will not step down for now

Ref: Riga 671

¶1. After meeting with the Board of the Union of the Greens and Farmers (ZZS) and Prime Minister Aigars Kalvitis (People's Party - TP) on September 3, Saeima (parliament) Speaker Indulis Emsis announced that he will retain in his position. Emsis added that further decisions will depend on activities of the Prosecutor General's Office. The statement contradicts to his statements last week (reftel) which suggested that he is ready to step down over corruption allegations.

¶2. Emsis portrayed the decision as one that was asked of him by his party and the PM, Emsis noted that he does not feel comfortable in the situation when the "shadow of suspicions is hanging over him." Therefore, he has made a decision to refrain from his duties related to international activities (he cancelled a planned trip to Finland, for example). Further, the Saeima Speaker announced that he would step down only if the Prosecutor's Office brings official charges against him. The Prosecutor's Office has stated that their further activities might follow within a week.

¶3. Comment: The issue is on hold, and far from resolved. We will continue to monitor.

SELDOWITZ